

campaign to prevent preterm birth. Also supporting the campaign are the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses and 28 other national organizations. I cannot think of a better group of organizations to take on this serious public health problem. As significant as the March of Dimes campaign will be, success in reducing the incidence of prematurity requires a commitment from the Federal Government as well.

I am pleased to be a cosponsor of vital legislation aimed at reducing the rates of preterm birth. The "PREEMIE Act" authorizes expansion of research into the causes and prevention of prematurity and increases Federal support of public and health professional education as well as support services related to prematurity.

I would like to conclude by telling you the story of Jacqueline Reineri. Born 4 months premature, at just 24 weeks gestation, Jacqueline was given a very slim chance for survival. She was the size of a small doll, weighing just 1 lb., 10 ounces. Jacqueline had a grade-three brain bleed among many other complications and spent 96 days in the neonatal intensive care unit, NICU.

Today, Jacqueline has Spastic Quadriplegia Cerebral Palsy and gets around in a power wheelchair. She has endured four major surgeries and will continue to experience many long-term effects of prematurity. While her family worries about her future, they feel blessed that she is a very intelligent second grader in a typical classroom and a very active advocate for prematurity and children with special needs, serving as the Missouri March of Dimes Ambassador.

As inspiring as Jacqueline's story is many premature babies aren't as lucky. The recent increase in the rate of infant mortality underscores the importance of a comprehensive public-private effort to find the causes and ultimately prevent premature birth.

I ask all of my colleagues to join me today in pledging to do all we can to ensure a day when all children are born healthy. ●

RADIO LIBERTY STIFLED IN UKRAINE

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, several weeks ago, I addressed the Senate, in my capacity as Co-Chairman of the Helsinki Commission, on critical Presidential elections scheduled to be held later this year in Ukraine. In the latest twist in the lead up to those elections, yesterday Radio Liberty was abruptly informed that its Ukrainian Service programming would be removed from its major radio rebroadcaster's FM schedule, beginning February 17. In a press release, RFE/RL President Tom Dine said, "This is a political act against liberal democracy, against free

speech and press, against RFE/RL, and shows, once again, that Ukraine's political leadership is unable to live in an open society and is compelled to 'control' the media as if it were the good old days of the Soviet Union."

This is not the first time that there has been official Ukrainian pressure to drop RFE/RL broadcasting since September 2001, shortly after the murder of independent journalist Heorhiy Gongadze and the release of secretly-recorded tapes in Ukrainian President Kuchma's office implicating him and other high-ranking officials in the disappearance, corruption, and other dubious actions. Radio Liberty covers these and many issues about life in Ukraine, serving as an objective source of information in a media environment increasingly dominated by these authorities.

In the past I have spoken out about Ukraine's troubled pre-election environment, including its media environment. This latest move, together with repressive measures against the democratic opposition and independent media over the course of the last few months, raise profound questions as to whether the October presidential elections will be free, fair, open, and transparent, in a manner consistent with Ukraine's freely undertaken OSCE and other international commitments. Effectively unplugging an important independent source of information does not bode well for democracy in Ukraine.

EXPORT-IMPORT BANK

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I acknowledge today, February 12, as the seventieth anniversary of the Export-Import Bank, the principal export credit agency of the United States. Since 1934, the bank has played a unique role in helping to facilitate U.S. exports, ultimately supporting thousands of jobs. As an independent U.S. Government agency, it assumes credit and country risks that the private sector is unable or unwilling to accept.

Eximbank has assisted in financing more than \$400 billion in U.S. exports. On average, 85 percent of its transactions directly benefit small businesses which are clearly struggling in today's economy. Historically, the Bank has a loan-loss rate of under 2 percent, which is a respectable record for any financial institution.

As the United States has become economically interdependent with a growing number of foreign trade partners, the Bank's role in leveling the playing field for American companies seeking to market their goods and services overseas continues to grow. In turn, Eximbank plays a vital part in enabling U.S. companies, both large and small, to turn export opportunities into concrete sales.

Mr. President, I am pleased to make not of Eximbank's important contribution to the U.S. economy and hope the institution continues to honor its mission through the twenty first century.

IN MEMORY OF MILTON WESLEY SANDERS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, Milton Wesley Sanders passed away on Tuesday, February 10, in Washington, DC. He was one of the rapidly vanishing members of what we rightfully call the "greatest generation".

These valiant Americans who fought in World War II did not merely defeat a savage and evil enemy. They literally saved the free world. What would our own lives have been like if the forces of Nazism had prevailed in that war? It is truly unthinkable, and thanks to the greatest generation and men like Milton Sanders, we will never have to know the answer.

This generation of Americans grew up during the Great Depression, so they already knew about sacrifice. And when their country called upon them to sacrifice even more, they did not hesitate.

Milt Sanders' first heroic act occurred when he was still in flight school in Florida. During a training flight near Tallahassee, FL, his new P-47 aircraft malfunctioned because of a missing part.

Rather than bail out over a populated area, he decided to take the airplane in for a "safe" crash landing. He could have landed safely on the campus of the Florida State College for Women now known as Florida State. But when he saw a lot of students walking across campus, he headed for a nearby field.

In the instant before landing he had to divert the aircraft to avoid hitting a farmer. In the resulting crash, he suffered a skull fracture and numerous other injuries. But his quick thinking and courage had saved innocent lives.

During the war, Milt flew 116 combat P-47 fighter-bomber missions with the 9th Air Force in the European theater of operations. He supported operations from the pre-Normandy invasion build-up through the race across France, the Battle of the Bulge, and the final victory over Nazi tyranny. He brought back seven aircraft so badly shot up that they were immediately sent to the scrap heap. He was credited with shooting down one German aircraft and destroying more than 25 aircraft on the ground. For his valor, Milt was awarded two Distinguished Flying Crosses, 20 Air Medals, two Presidential Unit citations, the French Croix de Guerre with Silver Star, and the Belgian Fourragere.

Milt, who was known to some of his squadron buddies as "Sandy," experienced the heroism of war, and he also saw the horror.

He saw one friend's aircraft crash into the ground. He saw another man bail out only to be knocked unconscious when he collided with his airplane. That man's parachute never opened.

He saw dead bodies that were booby-trapped.

He befriended an English family in London, only to find when he went to visit them that their home had been destroyed by a German V1 rocket.